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G-7 AGREES ON GLOBAL MINIMUM TAX RATE FOR MNCs

The Group of Seven wealthy democracies, whose finance ministers met in London on Saturday, have agreed to support a global minimum corporate tax of at least 15 per cent in order to deter multinational companies from avoiding taxes by stashing profits in low-rate countries.

CM TO DISTRICTS

'Positivity rate below 5% must to get curbs lifted'

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

AS the number of Covid-positive cases are coming down in Karnataka, the State Government is likely to relax lockdown restrictions in districts with a positivity rate below 5 per cent, Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa indicated on Saturday.

He said that the government will review the situation after four or five days and then take the decision. The government on Thursday extended the lockown till June 14 and the process of lifting the restrictions is likely to start only after that.

Fifty days after the second wave started in the State, the positivity rate has fallen below 10 per cent and on Saturday, it hit 9.69 per cent. Data from the Health Department showed that it has come down from a high of 32.73 during May 8-May 14 and 12.23 per cent between May 29 and June 4. In Bengaluru too, the positivity rate has gone down from 32.89 per cent during May 8-May 14 to 6.96 per cent during May 29 to June 4.

The Health Department is targeting micro-pockets within districts that have recorded a higher number of Covid cases. As on Saturday, the State had 2.68 lakh active cases. P3

AID TO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Saturday launched an initiative of depositing ₹3,000 each into the bank accounts of 25 lakh construction workers as part of Covid-19 relief announced under the first package. A sum of ₹749.55 crore has been earmarked for this purpose. P3

KARNATAKA	JUNE 4	JUNE 5
Fresh cases	16,068	13,800
Recoveries	22,316	25,346
Deaths	364	365

CENTRE GIVES TWITTER LAST CHANCE TO COMPLY

Uproar as 'blue ticks' briefly removed from accounts of V-P, RSS chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Centre on Saturday sent 'one last notice' to Twitter, giving the US social media company another chance to comply with India's IT rules, which came into effect on May 26.

"As a gesture of goodwill, Twitter Inc is hereby given one last notice to immediately comply with the Rules, failing which the exemption from liability available under Section 79 of the IT Act, 2000 shall stand withdrawn and Twitter shall be liable for consequences as per the IT Act and other penal laws of India," the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said.

Curiously, though, the strongly worded notice did not mention a specific date to comply with the rules. In the notice, MeitY said the US social media giant's refusal to comply with the Indian rules shows its "lack of commitment towards providing a safe experience for the people of India on its platform".

"Despite being operational in India for more than a decade, it is beyond belief that Twitter Inc has doggedly refused to create mechanism that will enable the people of India to resolve their issues on the platform in a timely and transparent manner and through fair processes, by India based, clearly identified resources," MeitY added. Meanwhile, Twitter declined to comment.

Notably, the IT Ministry's move comes on a day when Twitter courted controversy for removing the verified 'blue tick' marks of Vice President Venkaiah Naidu, RSS chief Mohan Bhagawat and RSS functionaries Suresh Soni, Arun Kumar, Suresh Joshi and Krishna Gopal. The microblogging platform's action created an uproar with critics accusing the social media firm of political bias.

Later, Twitter restored the verified badges. In its defence, Twitter said the blue tick was temporarily removed from Naidu's personal account as it was inactive since July last year. According to Twitter's verification policy, the platform may remove the blue tick and the 'verified' status if the account becomes inactive for more than six months. The "blue badge" helps users distinguish the authenticity of accounts that are of high public interest, and gives Twitter users more context about who they're having conversations with.

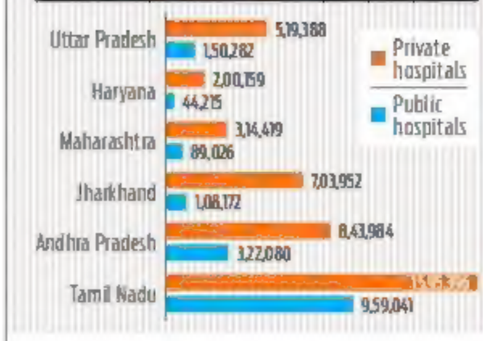
What next

If Twitter does not comply with govt norms, including appointing a chief compliance officer, it stands to lose its intermediary status that gives it immunity from liabilities over any third-party data hosted by it. In other words, it could be liable for criminal action in case of complaints

PRIVATE VS PUBLIC

With govt bearing the cost, most preferred pvt hosps

States where private hospital admissions outnumbered the ones at public facilities



People admitted to private hospitals **74.91 lakh**

Amount paid to private hospitals **₹11,611 crore**

Average expenditure per admission **₹15,500**

People admitted to public hospitals **62.96 lakh**

Amount paid to public hospitals **₹6,323 crore**

Average expenditure per hospitalisation **₹10,042**

BIG CHUNK OF AYUSHMAN BHARAT FUND SPENT TO FOOT PRIVATE HOSP BILLS

KUMAR VIKRAM @ New Delhi

UNDERLINING the poor state of public health infrastructure, particularly in small towns and rural areas, a majority of beneficiaries covered under the government's ambitious Ayushman Bharat scheme availed of hospitalisation at private hospitals instead of government facilities.

Till March 24, the total number of admissions under the scheme in private hospitals was 74.91 lakh, much higher than 62.96 lakh recorded in public hospitals, according to a reply received by this newspaper under the RTI Act. The reply revealed that of the total ₹17,934 crore spent by the government from the start of the year till March 24 to foot the beneficiaries' bill, ₹11,611 crore was paid to private hospitals, while the state-run facilities got ₹6,323 crore.

The average bill per admission at a private hospital was ₹15,500, at least 50% higher than ₹10,042 incurred at a public hospital. The reply said 14.66 crore health cards were issued till March 24 and 172.48 lakh admissions were authorised.

CONTINUED ON: P7

IAS feud: Rohini, Shilpa transferred from Mysuru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a new twist to the ongoing IAS vs IAS spat and the long tussle between Deputy Commissioner Rohini Sindhuri and elected representatives in Mysuru, Sindhuri was transferred to the Muzrai department as commissioner, the post which she held earlier.

In her place, 2009-batch IAS officer Dr Bagadi Goutham, who earlier served as Chikkamagaluru DC and was with the commercial taxes department as additional commissioner, has been posted as Mysuru DC.

The government did not spare Mysuru City Corporation Commissioner Shilpa Nag, who went public with her allegation of highhandedness against Sindhuri. She has been transferred as director (e-governance) RDPR, Bengaluru. On Friday, she was berated by Chief Secretary P Ravi Kumar for going to the press against Sindhuri without raising a formal complaint with her superiors. P3

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE EVIL EMPIRE
PLUS 12 PAGES MAGAZINE

SSLC marks to help grade PU II students

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN addition to their first PUC marks, students of Class 12 state board (Second PUC) will also be graded based on their SSLC marks.

Making the announcement on Saturday, Primary and Secondary Education Minister **S Suresh Kumar** suggested to the State Government to consider only the marks of CET and NEET for admission to professional courses.

The government on Friday cancelled the second PU exams and stated that the PU Education Board is working on an optimal formula for grading.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Bikini with Kannada flag sparks furore

ARUN KUMAR HURALIMATH @ Hubballi

AFTER Google, Amazon on Saturday landed in a controversy by putting up a bikini with Karnataka flag colours and emblem on sale on its Canada website. The e-commerce giant later removed the product after Kannadigas from across the world slammed the company.

On June 3, a Google search had shown Kannada as the ugliest language in the country. After a severe backlash, Google removed the website link and also apologised in Kannada.

The bikini that was being sold on Amazon had Karnataka flag colours and also depicted the emblem. It was being sold under the brand name BKDMHHH.

CONTINUED ON: P3

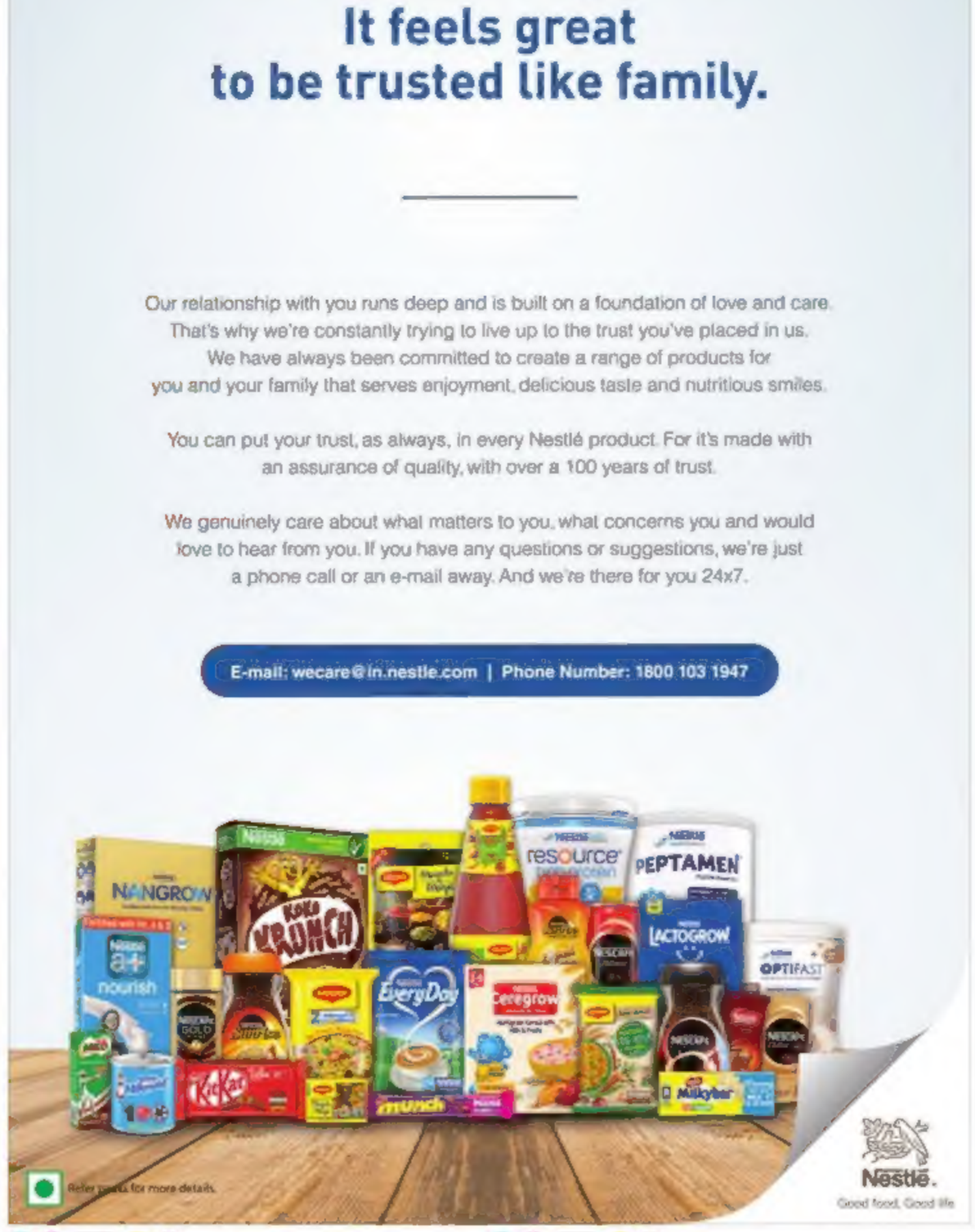
EXPRESS READ

Mamata appoints nephew TMC national general secretary

Kolkata: TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee on Saturday elevated her nephew and MP Abhishek Banerjee (33) as the party's all-India general secretary, the second-most important post in the organisation, a senior leader here said. TMC secretary general Partha Chatterjee told mediapersons about Abhishek Banerjee's nomination by the TMC supremo.

GST mop-up crosses ₹1 lakh cr mark for 8th straight month

New Delhi: GST tax collections remained above the ₹1 lakh crore mark for the eighth straight month in May, indicating that the impact of the second wave on the economy may have been limited. Tax collections on sale of goods and rendering of services in May at ₹1.02 lakh crore were 27 per cent lower than April 2021, but 65 per cent higher than May 2020.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